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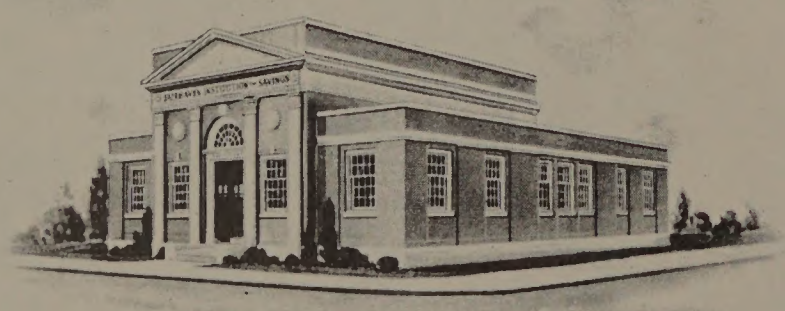

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IN THE WAKE OF THE MARY CELESTE
by James Franklin Briggs

ALTERATIONS

In the fall of 1872 the Mary Celeste was brought to New York for repairs. Captain Winchester decided to change her from a single to a double decked vessel. On opening her it was found that the unseasoned timber put into her when she was built had decayed, doubtless because the rock salt in the pockets between her timbers had not been renewed often enough, and they had to tear her to pieces clear down to the water's edge, and put in nearly an entire new frame. At the same time, it is believed, her rig was changed from a single topsail to double topsails. By the changes in the hull her tonnage was increased from 206 tons to 282 tons, making her about the size of Ship Charles W. Morgan, formerly exhibited on the estate of Colonel Edward H. R. Greene at Round Hills, South Dartmouth. The repairs to the Mary Celeste cost $11,500 instead of about $3,000 as had been contemplated. Doubtless Winchester was glad to recoup some of his outlay by selling a one third interest in her to Captain Benjamin S. Briggs, who became her new master.

CAPTAIN BRIGGS AND THE FAMOUS VOYAGE

Benjamin Spooner Briggs, numbering among

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his ancestors Mayflower Pilgrims and Revolutionary patriots, was born in Wareham, Massachusetts, in 1835 and spent his boyhood in the nearby town of Marion at Rose Cottage where his father lived when home from foreign voyages. Following in the steps of his father and grandfather he went to sea at an early age. In 1855, sailing before the mast, he was one of a crew of 47 men on Ship Hope, commanded by his father, Captain Nathan Briggs, on a voyage from New York to San Francisco, Callao, Chincha Islands, and thence around "the Horn" to London. In a few years Benjamin rose to be master and commanded in succession Brig Sea Foam, Schooner Forest King, Bark Prima Dona, and Bark Arthur.

About the middle of Oactober 1872 Captain Ben left his family in Marion to go to New York to finish fitting out and loading his latest charge, brig Mary Celeste. On Saturday October 26 his wife Sarah and daughter Sophy, two years old, went by Fall River Line boat to New York, leaving son Arthur, aged seven, with his grandmother in Marion to continue his schooling in the village. In her letter to Arthur, dated Sunday October 27, Sarah writes:

"Well, Sophy and I got here all right this morning, and father met us at the boat and brought us over to his vessel, which is the brig Mary Celeste."

Little Sophy was interested in the ship's cat that was tied up down below so it could not run away and kept crying to get out. Sophy called her "Poo-uh Poo!"

"She was very much delighted," writes her mother, "to see Sarah Jane and Daisy (her

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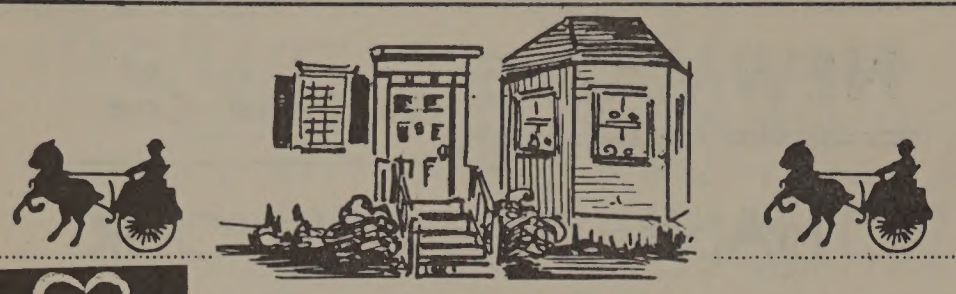

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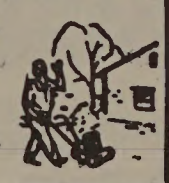

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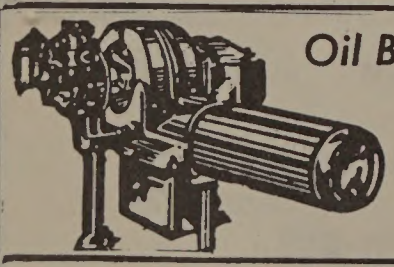

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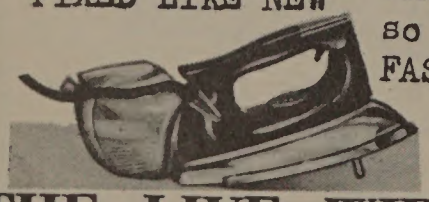

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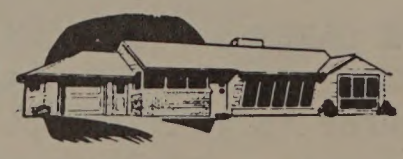

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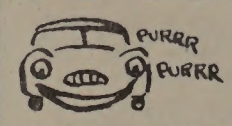

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dolls) when we gave them to her. After a while Mother was playing on the melodeon and she wanted Sarah Jane to play, too, so Mother took her to teach her.. Finding that it was her right arm that was broken and not wishing her to play left-handed, Mother turned her round back-to, and she played quite as well as if she had faced the music. Afterwards Father made Daisy play two parts with her two feet, so that Sophy seemed quite proud of her two children. She has got them cuddled up in bed with her now and they are all fast asleep."

Life on board the vessel was not without its social moments, and Sarah always saw the amusing side of every occurence. In a letter which whe wrote to her sister Mary Scribner Cobb in Marion, Mass., dated November 2, 1872 she says:

"I suppose about the time this reaches you Willie and bride will be with you. They will tell you of their call on board Mary Celeste and the ride (to Central Park) which followed. Emmie seemed to think our little home was quite cozy, but she must also have thought it rather low in the walls, as her bonnet was pushed off in coming down stairs and she had quite a laugh over the undignified appearance she presented on her presentation to me with her bonnet hanging around her neck. That made the introduction (which might otherwise have been a little formal, owing to a slight precision of manner on her part, and a natural bashfulness on mine) quite easy, and the manner I did not notice at all after a time, she seemed so glad to see us, and said she did not feel as if she were meeting strangers, she had heard so much of us from Willie and brother Charlie".

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The "Willie" spoken of here was Sarah's younger brother, who at the age of 14 years through his knowledge of trigonometry and logarithms helped to navigate a ship. He became later a doctor of divinity, a Sanskrit scholar, and the learned librarian of the Congregational Library on Beacon Street in Boston.

On Sunday November 3 the Captain wrote to his mother in Marion: "It seems real homelike since Sarah and Sophia got here, and we enjoy our little quarters...We seem to have a very good mate (Albert G. Richardson from Maine) and steward, and I hope shall have a pleasant voyage. We both have missed Arthur and I believe I should have sent for him , if I could have thought of a good place to stow him away...

"Our vessel is in beautiful trim and I hope we shall have a fine passage, but as I have never been in her before, I can't say how she'll sail....

"Hoping to be with you again in the spring, with much love, I am

Yours affectionately,
Benj."

At pier 50 East River the vessel was loaded with 1700 barrels of alcohol in red oak casks, to the disturbance of Sarah who wrote, "The fact there is such an amount of thumping and bumping, of shakings and tossings to and fro of the cargo, and of screechings and growlings by escaping steam, that I believe I've gone slightly daft."

On Monday November 4, with the loading completed, Captain Briggs signed the crew list and articles of agreement at the New York Custom House. On Tuesday morning the Mary Celeste was towed out from the pier, but did not proceed to sea at once as is evidenced

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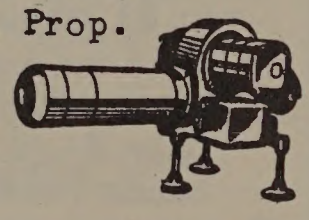

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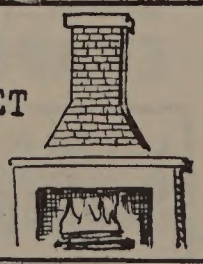

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by the following letter penned by the captain's wife and mailed on shore by the pilot. This is the last word ever received from any of the ten people who embarked on this fatal voyage.

"Brig Mary Celeste
Off Staten Island, November 7

Dear Mother Briggs,--

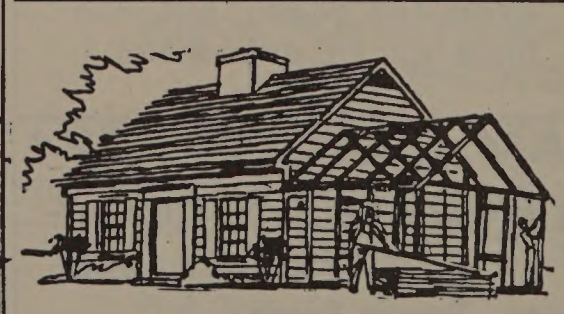
"Probably you will be a little surprised to receive a letter with this date, but instead of proceeding to sea when we came out Tuesday morning, we anchored about a mile or so from the city, as it was strong head wind, and Ben said it looked so thick and nasty ahead we shouldn't gain much if we were beating and banging about. Accordingly we took a fresh departure this morning with wind light but favorable, so we hope to get outside without being obliged to anchor....

"Benjie thinks we have got a pretty peaceable set this time all around if they continue as they have begun. Can't tell yet how smart they are. B. reports a good breeze now, says we are going along nicely....

"As I have nothing more to say I will follow A. Ward's advice and say it at once. Farewell.

"Yours affectionately,
Sarah."

Bound for Genoa with a cargo of Alcohol the Mary Celeste sailed with a fair wind from New York and made good time until she reached the Azores Islands. There is no reason to believe that she experienced any



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unusual incident up to this time. On Monday November 25, according to the log slate, the wind was fresh and the vessel was making eight knots. At 9 P. M. "Got in Royal and top G. Sail". At midnight the wind was west, the weather rainy, and the course of the vessel E. by S. At 8 o'clock the following morning the eastern point of the island of Santa Maria bore S.S.W. 6 miles distant.

From that hour there is no record of what happened to any of the ten people on the little brig. From the evidence found by those who ten days later boarded the vessel we may believe that the captain became suddenly alarmed, hauled aback the square sails to stop her headway, ordered all hands into the yawl boat, and temporarily left the ship, which subsequently gathered way and sailed off. As the salvors made no mention of finding even the cat, we may conclude that when little Sophy was summoned to go, she took in her arms "Poo-uh Poo," and in the heavily laden open boat all perished together.

"History is written with something besides ink; the overtones of its . . . tragedies are part of the still, sad music of humanity. One cannot write of them unmoved."*

*Quoted from "History of American Congregationalism" by Gaius Glenn Atkins and Frederick L. Fagley.

Continued next week

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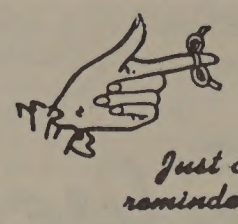

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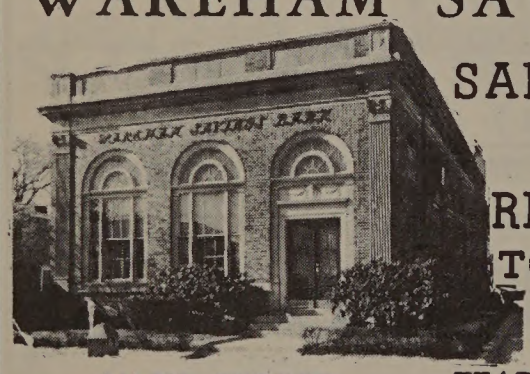

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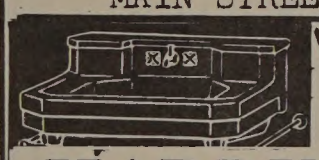

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THE COFFEE SHOPPE
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Dinners — Full Course — A La Carte — Lunches
Main Street, Route 6 WAREHAM, MASS.

HONOR ROLL ANNOUNCED

The following honor roll for the second term at Mattapoisett Center School has been announced by Principal Arthur F. Baker: Grade 3, Susan Hawkins, Marthe Heuberger, Gerald Hopkins, Susan Perry, James Ward, Victoria Yen, Ann Figueiredo and John Matthews; Grade 4, Andrea Boardman, Joseph Costa, Douglas Crabbe, Henry Deneault, Judith Dexter, Michael Ellis, Robert Moore, Stephen Power, David Smith, Richard Smith and Judith Young; Grade 5, Judith Furnans, Ross Hopkins, Nancy Peck, Linda Price and Roberta Turner; Grade 6, Martha Aston, Susan Burnham, Nancy Downing, Joyce Harrison, Ruth Heuberger, Duncan Power, Jonathan Raymond, Carol Winters, William Young, Richard Blasdale, Kathie Schrage and Carole Sherman; Grade 7, Denise Johnson, Linda Purrington, Mary Reed, Doreen Sylvia and Beverly Turner; Grade 8, Carolyn Eldridge, Gregory Erhard, Susan Erhard, Gale Foster, Alberta Norlander and Thomas Renahan; Grade 9, Jean Alden, Judith Callahan, Ruth Downing, Anne Fitzgerald, Frances Hyland, Ellen Mahoney and Kathleen Radcliffe.

On the achievement roll for the second term are the following: Grade 3, John Anderson, Ann Apperson, David Cobb, Ann DeCosta, Ann Figueiredo, Robert Flanders, Peter Foster, Donald Green, Malcolm Hardy, Peter Joslin, Elizabeth Meetis and Carol Wordell; Grade 4, Daniel Alves, Andrea Boardman, Stephen Cobb, Douglas Crabbe, Michael Ellis, Penelope Field, Robert Joslin, Michael McAdams, Paul Morris, Deborah Nash, Catherine Nunes, Jean Perry, David Pratt, David Smith, Roxanne Stanley, Robert Sylvia and Robert Teachman; Grade 5, Priscilla Bradley, Ruy Carvalho, Harry Down-

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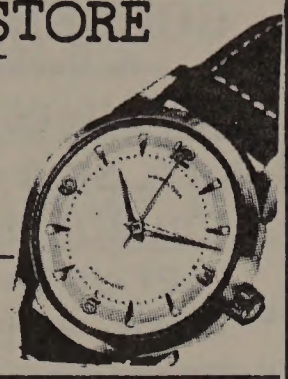

ing, John Duff, Carol Dunn, Michael Fitzgerald, Laurence Flanders, Judith Furnans, Catherine Heuberger, Robert Heuberger, Eleanor Linhares, Alfred Pate, and Robert Satterley; Grade 6, Robert Alves, Betsy Bushnell, Nancy Downing, Bruce Dunn, Charles Fermino, Barbara Gast, Joan Macedo, Linda Montgomery, Joan Sawyer, Alan Silveira, Marie Tyler, John Vermilya and Wayne Walega; Grade 7, Ruth Correia, Ernest Deneault, Albert Goodwin, Denise Johnson, Elaine Nobrega, Shirley Price, Linda Purrington, Michael Renahan and Robert Souza; Grade 8, Susan Pelson, John Tarvis and Alan Taylor; Grade 9, Jean Alden, Raymond Biron, Judith Callahan, John Concannon, Florence Dexter, Ann Farley, Anne Fitzgerald, Barry Hagen, Betsy Heuberger, Betsy Huggins, Frances Hyland, Patricia Kelley, Evelyn Morgado, Patricia Rebello, Lee Nottage, Jovina Santos and Betty Souza.

IN HOSPITAL

Mrs. Hoyle Demoranville of Rochester is under treatment for a heart attack at St. Lukes Hospital in New Bedford.

CELEBRATED WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES

Mr. and Mrs. George Bettencourt of Rochester celebrated their fifteenth wedding anniversary on January 13th. On the same day, Mr. and Mrs. Julian Weigel of Rochester celebrated their 34th wedding anniversary.

Jenkins "in the village" Marion, Massachusetts

GREETING CARDS
Botany & Seaspun YARNS
SANDWICHES
GULF HILL ICE CREAM

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Free $19.95 Offer
ON THE SENSATIONAL "RATED NO. 1–BEST BUY"
New EUREKA Roto-Matic SWIVEL-TOP CLEANER
Cleans all over from 1 position
Guaranteed by Good Housekeeping
Dramatic New Beauty!
20% More Suction!
FREE of EXTRA COST!
$19.95 STORAGE CHEST— TV BENCH
Holds Eureka Roto-Matic, all tools—provides extra seating
Exclusive Attach-O-Matic Clip-on Tools
Get Both For $69.95
YOU GET $19.95 CHEST FREE
Complete with deluxe tools
ALL that's modern in ONE cleaner!
• plus exciting new colors—rich red and silver gray!
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• and the LOW Eureka price saves you $40 to $50!
You Save $40 to $50
See "live" demonstration at our store AT ONCE or
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Laundry - Wet, Dry or Ironed to perfection.
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CHUCK ROAST HEAVY STEER BONELESS....LB. 49¢

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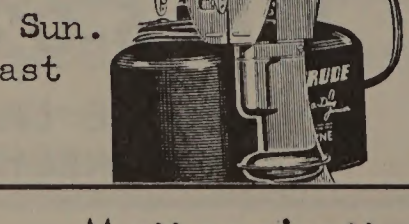

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Prescriptions Carefully Compounded

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WHITE COTTAGE ICE CREAM

1/2 GAL 98¢

Try the Drug Store First

Route 6 and Main Mattapoisett Skyline 8-2142

WINNER

The picture of Cannon Street, Mattapoisett is won this week by Ray Buckley, Acushnet Road, Mattapoisett. Please pick up your prize at the Presto office.

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YOU CAN NOW OWN A 1955 EVINRUDE FOR AS LITTLE AS $ 25.00 DOWN

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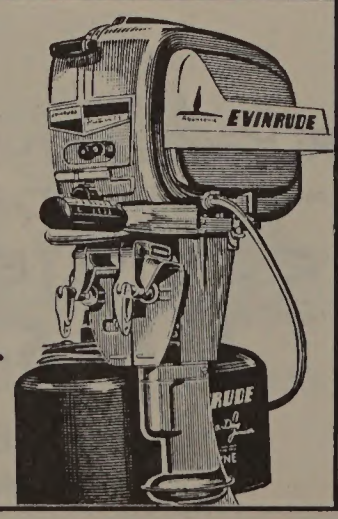

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ERNEST W. HAWORTH

EMERGENCY OPERATION PERFORMED

Tony Secia of Cannon Street, Mattapoisett is a patient at St. Lukes Hospital in New Bedford. An emergency operation was performed on him last Tuesday night.

NOMINATION PAPERS TO BE FILED

Nomination papers are to be filed with the Registrar of Voters of the Town of Rochester by 5 P. M. on January 31st and by 5 P. M. February 7th with the Town Clerk.

The last day for new voters to register is February 15th from 12 noon to 10 P. M. in Rochester.

ROCHESTER GRANGERS MEET

The Rochester Grange held their regular meeting on Wednesday evening, January 12th with Mrs. Thomas Gayoski, master, presiding. The sum of $5. was voted for the March of Dimes. On Wednesday evening, January 19th, the Grange will serve a supper to the Cranberry Association.

The grange has been invited to visit the Fairhaven Grange on February 27th. The nickel march was won by Lena Davis of Marion and Mrs. Downing.

Entertainment was by the Sippican Lecturer's Circle. Visitors were from Acushnet, Mattapoisett and Marion. Refreshments were served by Mrs. Gayoski and Mrs. George Kirby.

PATIENT AT HOSPITAL

Mrs. William Warubrton of Mattapoisett is a patient at St. Lukes Hospital in Middleboro

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"The Willows" Guest House ROOM for permanant guest, with or without board 36 PEARL STREET Tel 8-2515

BUSINESSMEN ELECT OFFICERS

The following officers were elected at the annual dinner meeting of the Mattapoisett Businessmen's Association on Tuesday evening at the Holiday House: Murray DeCoffe, president; Edmund Valladoa, vice-president; Henry Dunseith, secretary-treasurer; Leonard A. Burnham, director for one year and Edmund Perry and Osmond Gingras, directors for two years. Wives of the members were guests and dancing followed.

JOHN M. MULCAHY ADDRESSES JUNIOR HIGH CLASS

On January 10, 1955, Mr. John M. Mulcahy, Jr., parole officer for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, addressed the Junior High School grades of the Mattapoisett Center School on "Probations, Prisons, and Parole". Mr. Mulcahy's talk was followed by a lively question and discussion period in which many pupils participated.

PARENTS OF SON

Mr. and Mrs. George Ward of Hammond Street, Mattapoisett are parents of a son, born Wednesday, January 12th at St. Lukes Hospital, New Bedford.

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. . . especially those you save!
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CALSO GAS 24¢ gal.
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Winter Hours 8 am - 7 pm EAST OF
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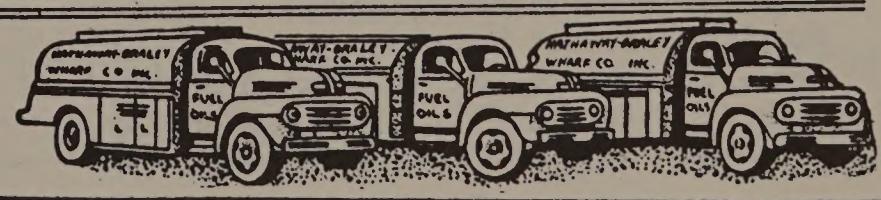

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CHURCH SERVICES

FRIENDS MEETING HOUSE
Sunday Services
Bible School 10:00 AM
Morning Service 11:00 AM

ST ANTHONY'S CHURCH
Sunday Masses
6:30, 8, 9:30 and 11 A. M.
MARION

ST GABRIEL'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
SOUTH & FRONT STREET, MARION
Sunday Services
The Holy Communion 8:00 AM
Family Prayer & Social Coffee Hour 9:30AM
Morning Prayer & Sermon 10:45 AM
ROCHESTER

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
Sunday Services
Sunday School 9:30 AM
Morning Worship 10:30 AM

NORTH ROCHESTER CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
Sunday Services
Sunday School 3:00 PM
Evening Service 7:00 PM

CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH MATTAPOISETT
Sunday Services
Sunday School
Primary, Intermediate & Senior 9:30 AM
Nursery 10:45 AM
Morning Worship 10:45 AM
Youth Fellowship, Jr. High 6:30 PM
Youth Fellowship, Sr. High 8:15 PM
Thursday
Adult Church School 8:00 PM

FAIRHAVEN UNITARIAN CHURCH
Sunday Morning Worship 11:00
Consultation Hours Tuesday 10-11:30A.M
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News Item

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SUCCESSFUL STEAK SUPPER SERVED

A most successful steak supper was served by the Couples Club of the Mattapoisett Congregational Church Saturday evening in the church vestry. Approximately 100 persons were served the deliciously broiled steak at tables which were decorated with Christmas greens and a miniature snowman as a centerpiece. Congratulations to the committee. They did a wonderful job.

IN THE ROCHESTER LEAGUE AT BOWL-MOR ALLEYS

Rounseville Saw Mill maintained their lead in the Rochester League with a 4 point win over the Hartley Saw Mill. Wally Wojtkonski's 345 was high for Rounseville's and Malcolm Cameron's 371 was high for Hartley's.

G. Mellone's 352 led the Firemen to a 3 point win over Center Garage, whose high man was Eddie Arruda with 325.

Led by Walt Pierce's 345 the Marion Launderette took 3 points from the Baptist Church, whose high man was Arthur Bassett, Jr. with 310.

Bettencourt's Market took 3 from Hartley's Garage. Ed. Graham's 354 and Ed. Swift's 341 were high for this match.

A REMINDER

Just a reminder. The dessert-card party to be held by the Women's Community Guild of the Mattapoisett Congregational Church is to be in the church vestry on Thursday. January 20th at 1:30 P. M. Come one and all. Tickets are 50¢ each person and mey be purchased from any member of the executive board, or by calling Mrs. Laurence Raymond at 8-2244.

ILL AT HOME

Mrs. Grace Howard has been ill at her home on River Road, Mattapoisett. Mrs. Albert Heuberger has been substituting for her at the cafeteria at Center School.

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Marion Road near Gulf Hill Tel. 8-3555

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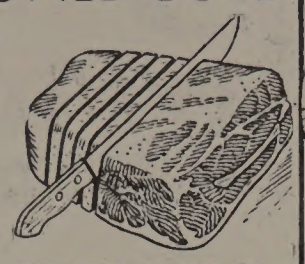


AL'S WHOLESALE MEATS

BROKEN WRISTS

Michael Fitzgerald, 9 year old son of Mr. and Mrs. G. M. Fitzgerald of Church Street, Mattapoisett, has both wrists broken which resulted from a fall.

STORE OFFERS FISHING SUPPLY EQUIPMENT

Thomas Von Mello, national racing champion, and Joe Rose, formerly of Mattapoisett, owners and operators of the Marion Outboard on Route 6, have recently been granted an Evinrude franchise. The store offers the public an extensive hobby supply shop and fishing supply equipment.

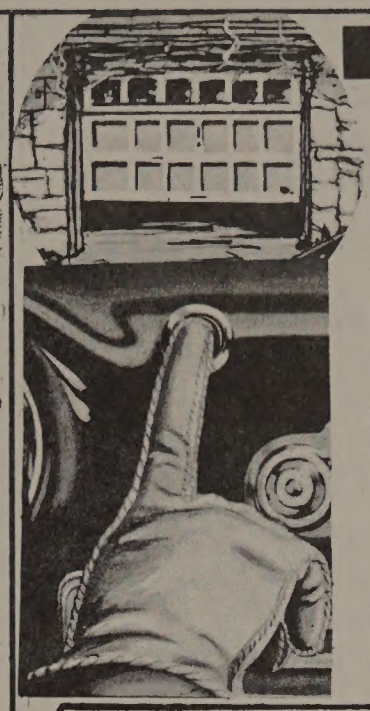
HOME AND COMMUNITY NIGHT AT JUVENILE GRANGE

The Mattapoisett Juvenile Grange will meet on Friday, January 21st at 7:30 at the Grange Hall. It will be Home and Community Service night with Dorreen Sylvia in charge. The committee will also sell homemade candy.

The calendar for February and March is the following: February 4th, Birthday anniversary; February 18th, Lincoln and Washington program; March 4th, Neighbor's Night with West Wareham & Watuppa Juvenile Granger's guests; March 18th Degree.

PARENTS OF DAUGHTER

Mr. and Mrs. Ray A. Buckley of Acushnet Road, Mattapoisett are parents of a daughter, Katherine Hallin, born January 12, 1955 at Tobey Hospital, Wareham.



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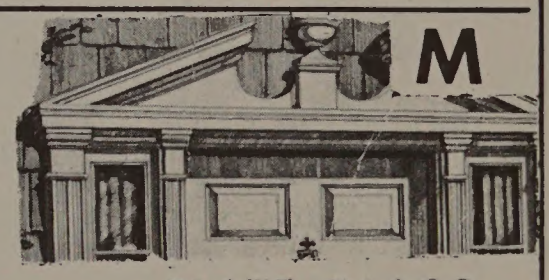

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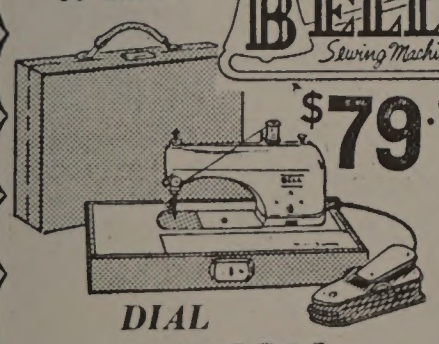

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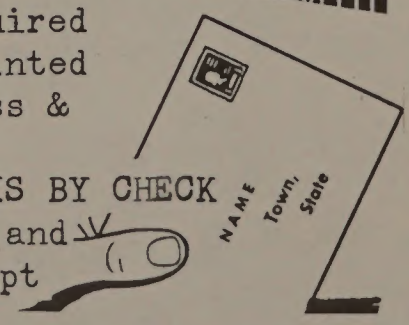

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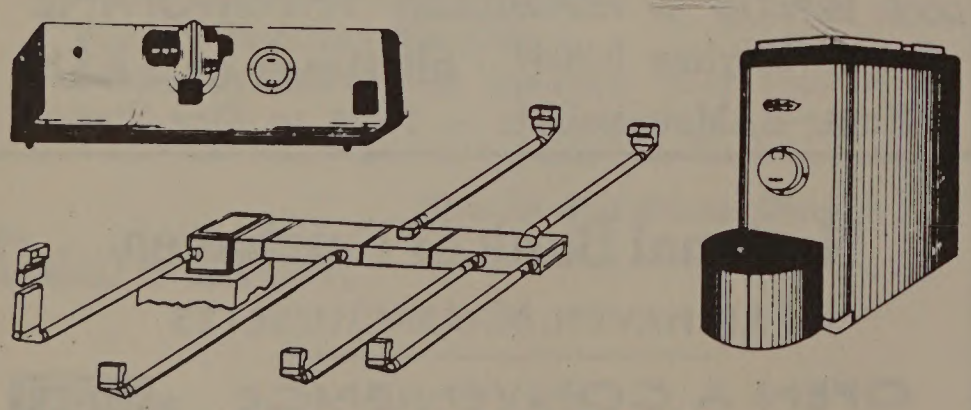

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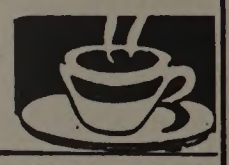
The place where you meet your friends for a cup of GOOD COFFEE.



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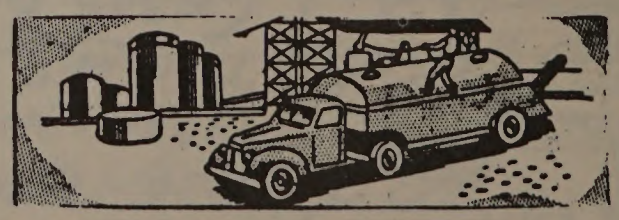

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